

72 Needs of the Padmanabhapuram Municipality.

MR. C. P. PADMANABHA PILLAI (*Municipal Council, Padmanabhapuram*) said at the outset that the occasion of the current session of the Assembly was a unique one, as it happened to be the first sitting of the Assembly after the assumption of full ruling powers by His Highness the Maha Raja and of the charge of the Administration by the Dewan. The member was confident that His Highness' reign would inaugurate an era of unprecedented glory for the State and of increased happiness and contentment to his subjects. The members of the Assembly were particularly grateful for His Highness' gracious announcement that the Assembly would be reconstituted and placed on a statutory basis with enlarged powers and functions. The member also offered the respectful felicitations of his constituency to the Dewan for his appointment as the Head of the Administration, especially at a time when there were important problems concerning the relationship between British India and the State, which required careful handling by trained administrators of proved ability like that of the Dewan.

Passing on to his subject, the member said that the necessity for the transfer of the site of the P. W. D. Telephone Exchange to the Padmanabhapuram Municipality for the location of the office building of the Council had been repeatedly urged at the four previous sessions of the Assembly; but in spite of unduly prolonged correspondence, the Public Works Department had not yet agreed to its transfer. The reason assigned for not surrendering the site was that the department had no funds to put up a building to locate the Telephone office. But pending construction of a new office building, the Telephone office could be conveniently accommodated in the rented building in which the Municipal Office was housed. The necessary orders should be issued accordingly without any further delay.

The member next requested that the Padmanabhapuram Municipality might be exempted from the payment of fees to the Law Officers of the Government for giving legal opinion to the Municipality. The decision of the Government that the Municipalities should pay in such cases would greatly affect poor Municipalities like the Padmanabhapuram Municipality, which could not find funds even for the discharge of their normal duties. A Municipality was not a private or a foreign body but was a quasi-Government institution and as such the denial to a Municipality of the benefit of the advice of the Government's Law Officers was not fair or reasonable. The Government should at least make a distinction between the major and the minor Municipalities in this respect and exempt the latter from the payment. The duty of the Government to give legal opinion gratis was all the greater, in view of the fact that several conflicting and vague provisions were found in the Municipal Regulation, which had already been brought to the notice of the Government. The member requested that, in the circumstances, and in consideration of the poor finances of the

Padmanabhapuram Municipality, the same should be exempted from the payment of fees to the Law Officers for giving legal opinion.

The urgent necessity for the renovation of the *kal* connecting the P. P. Channel with the Kottaram tank (*Homapura Neerazhi*) and the construction of an outlet for the flow of water from the tank to the Fort South Ward of the Municipality had been urged on the attention of the Government. But it was regrettable to find that the Government had asked the Municipality whether they were prepared to incur an expenditure of Rs. 1,000 for the preliminary investigation of the scheme. The member was at a loss to know why the mere renovation of an existing *kal* and the construction of an outlet required a preliminary investigation at all. The member said that the sum of Rs. 1,000 required for the preliminary investigation would be sufficient to carry out the work itself. He requested that the Chief Engineer might be instructed to afford an opportunity to the members of the Municipal Council to discuss with him at the spot the nature of the work to be carried out.

The desirability of removing the fishermen's quarters from within the municipal limits had already been brought to the notice of the Government. The Council had recommended to the Government the grant of loans to the poor fishermen in the town to put up houses on the site proposed to be purchased outside the town limits. The Government had informed the Council that the question of granting the loans would be considered after the fishermen had acquired the required sites. As the fishermen had now purchased the sites, arrangements might be made for granting them the loans through their parish priest.

The necessity for the appointment of a lady doctor in the Tuckalai District Hospital had been repeatedly urged on the attention of the Government both by the public of Tuckalai and by the representatives of the Padmanabhapuram Municipal Council at the previous sessions of the Assembly. But the Government had since refused the request on the ground that there was a lady doctor in the District Hospital at Nagercoil, which was only 10 miles from Tuckalai. But it was difficult even for people in affluent circumstances to requisition the services of the lady doctor stationed at Nagercoil, especially at short notice, to attend on urgent labour cases in Tuckalai. In these days when the rate of infantile mortality and of death from childbirth was on the increase, to say that one lady doctor was sufficient for Tuckalai and Nagercoil, which were 10 miles apart, was to deny the benefit of medical relief to one of the biggest districts in the State. If it was on the ground of additional expenditure that the Government were reluctant to reconsider the question of the appointment of a lady doctor in the local hospital, there was no objection to take away the Assistant to the Medical Officer at Tuckalai and appointing in his place a lady doctor. One male doctor and one female doctor would meet the requirements of the people of this taluk.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Padmanabha Pillai, the question of the transfer of the site of the Public Works Department Telephone Exchange will be decided soon.

Your other representations are either being considered or will be considered.

73. Needs of the Colachel town.

MR. R. KUMARA PILLAI (*Municipal Council, Colachel*) first represented about the necessity for the establishment of a Munsiff's Court at Colachel. The desirability of shifting one of the Munsiff's Courts at Tuckalai to Colachel had been repeatedly represented at several past sessions of the Assembly. The *pakuthies* of Eraniel, Talakkulam, Kadiyapattanam, Manavalakkurichi, Colachel, Midalam, Kizhmidalam, Nattalam, Killiyur, Keezhkulam and Kappiyara, which were included within the jurisdiction of the Munsiff's Court at Padmanabhapuram, were nearer to Colachel than to Padmanabhapuram, and if one of the Munsiff's Courts was shifted to Colachel, it would be a great boon to the people inhabiting the above-said *pakuthies*.

Colachel was the only Municipal town in the State which had no Magistrate's Court. Originally, there was a Magistrate's Court at Colachel, but it was shifted to Eraniel, to the great disadvantage of the people of Colachel. A Magistrate's Court or at least a Munsiff-Magistrate's Court should be continued at Colachel.

It would appear that the Government had issued orders sanctioning the conversion of the Police Station at Colachel into an Outpost. If this was true, it was quite unjustifiable in view of the number of cases filed in the Police Station and of the seriousness of the crimes committed in the locality. The orders in the matter should be cancelled and the Police Station should be continued with an additional Head Constable and 10 additional Constables.

The urgent necessity of converting the local dispensary into a hospital had been repeatedly urged on the attention of the Government, but without any result. The number of patients that sought medical relief in the dispensary was larger than in most of the hospitals of the State. The dispensary should therefore be converted into a hospital or if that was not possible immediately, the supply of medicine to the dispensary should be increased and better facilities should be afforded for the treatment of in-patients.

The arrack and toddy shops should be removed from within the town limits.

The necessity for the construction of a pier at Colachel port had been repeatedly urged at several previous sessions of the Assembly. The Government should bestow their early attention on the subject.

The member next represented about the necessity for improving the Chemmankulam tank. To a representation made at the 24th session of the Assembly, urging for a separate tank in the town, the Government replied that the Chemmankulam tank might be utilised after carrying out the necessary improvements. The finances of the